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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Romania, Sweden, Turkey, Venezuela and Zambia: draft resolution

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as stated in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter, is to promote universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind, including distinction as to sex,

Affirming that women and men should participate equally in social, economic and political development, should contribute equally to such development and should share equally in improved conditions of life,

Recalling its resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979, by which it adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Recalling also its previous resolutions on the Convention, and taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/7 of 21 July 1994,

Welcoming the growing number of States parties to the Convention, which now stands at one hundred thirty-four,

Noting with deep concern that the Convention is still one of the human rights instruments with a large number of reservations, many which run contrary

to the object and purpose of the Convention, despite the fact that some States parties have withdrawn their reservations to it,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 1/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna in June 1993, in which the Conference stipulated that the human rights of women and the girl child were an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights,

Recalling also that, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Conference recommended the adoption of new procedures to strengthen implementation of the commitment to women's equality and human rights, including a call upon the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to examine quickly the possibility of introducing the right of petition through the preparation of an optional protocol to the Convention,

Taking note of the decision adopted at the Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, on 4 February 1992, 2/

Aware of the important contribution that the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women 3/ can make to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and to achieving legal and de facto equality between women and men,

Having considered the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its twelfth 4/ and thirteenth 5/ sessions,

Taking note of the suggestions and general recommendations made by the Committee in accordance with its mandate, as demonstrated most recently by the Committee at its thirteenth session, at which the Committee adopted suggestion No. 6 on the International Conference on Population and Development and general recommendation No. 21 related to articles 9, 15 and 16 of the Convention as its contribution to the International Year of the Family, as well as other general recommendations made by the Committee,

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1/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

2/ See CEDAW/SP/1992/4.

3/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/48/38).

5/ Ibid., Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/49/38).

Noting that the workload of the Committee has increased because of the growing number of States parties to the Convention, that the annual session of the Committee is still the shortest of all the annual sessions of the human rights treaty bodies and that, in spite of the recommendation by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1992/17 of 30 July 1992, which was supported by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/94 of 16 December 1992, that three weeks be allowed for each session of the Committee in order to consider the reports submitted by the States parties until the backlog in reports had been eliminated, a considerable backlog still remains,

Convinced of the need to adopt measures to enable the Committee to consider in a thorough and timely manner the reports submitted by States parties and to discharge all its responsibilities under the Convention,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the working methods of the Committee and its capacity to fulfil its mandate effectively, including a comparison of other treaty bodies, 6/

Welcoming the efforts of the Committee to further improve its working methods by adopting concluding observations containing specific suggestions and recommendations,

Recalling that, under article 17, paragraph 9, of the Convention, the Secretary-General is required to provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee,

Recalling its resolutions 44/73 of 8 December 1989, 45/124 of 14 December 1990 and 47/94 of 16 December 1992, in which, inter alia, it strongly supported the view of the Committee that the Secretary-General should accord higher priority to strengthening support for the Committee,

Strongly supporting general recommendation No. 19 of the Committee on violence against women, and calling upon States parties to prepare their periodic reports in accordance with this and other general recommendations of the Committee,

Noting with satisfaction the appointment of a Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, including its causes and consequences,

1. Expresses its satisfaction with the increasing number of States that have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and supports the general recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to draw attention to those reservations which are incompatible with the objective and purpose of the Convention;

2. Urges all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible;

6/ A/49/308, chap. III.

3. Emphasizes the importance of the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the Convention;

4. Encourages States to consider limiting the extent of any reservation they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible and to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention or otherwise contrary to international law;

5. Requests States parties to the Convention to review their reservations regularly, with a view to withdrawing them expeditiously so that the Convention may be fully implemented;

6. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 7/ and requests him to submit annually to the General Assembly a report on the status of the Convention;

7. Takes note also of the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its twelfth 4/ and thirteenth 5/ sessions;

8. Recommends that the States parties to the Convention, in the light of the reports mentioned in paragraphs 6 and 7 review the working situation of the Committee and its capacity to fulfil its mandate more effectively, and in this context also that the States parties consider the possibility of amending article 20 of the Convention so as to allow for sufficient meeting time for the Committee;

9. Requests the States parties to the Convention to meet in 1995 in order to consider the review of article 20 of the Convention mentioned in paragraph 8;

10. Invites States parties to the Convention to make all possible efforts to submit their initial as well as their second and subsequent periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention, in accordance with article 18 thereof and with the guidelines provided by the Committee, and to cooperate fully with the Committee in the presentation of their reports;

11. Welcomes the efforts made by the Committee to rationalize its procedures and expedite the consideration of periodic reports, and strongly encourages the Committee to continue those efforts;

12. Welcomes also, in accordance with general recommendation No. 11 of the Committee, 8/ the initiatives taken to provide regional training courses on the preparation and drafting of reports of States parties for government officials and training and information seminars for States considering acceding to the Convention, and urges the relevant organs and organizations of the United Nations to support such initiatives;

7/ Ibid., chap. II.

8/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/44/38), sect. V.

13. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to provide secretariat staff, including legal staff members expert in human rights treaty implementation, and technical resources for the effective performance by the Committee of its functions;

14. Strongly supports the view of the Committee that the Secretary-General should accord higher priority within existing resources to strengthening technical and substantive support for the Committee, in particular to assist in preparatory research;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide for, facilitate and encourage, within existing resources, the dissemination of information relating to the Committee, its decisions and recommendations, the Convention and the concept of legal literacy, taking into account the Committee's own recommendations to that end;

16. Supports the request of the Committee at its twelfth and thirteenth sessions for additional meeting time, with adequate support from the Secretariat, so as to allow for the Committee to meet once a year for three weeks for its fourteenth and fifteenth sessions, and recommends that the request made by the Committee for additional meeting time be considered within the existing level of budgetary resources;

17. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure adequate support to the Committee, and also requests the sufficient resources from within the existing regular budget be provided for that purpose to enable the Committee to deal in a thorough and timely manner with reports submitted by States parties;

18. Decides that, at its fifty-first session, it will review once again whether the backlog of the Committee in considering reports has been reduced;

19. Recommends that meetings of the Committee should be scheduled, whenever possible, to allow for the timely transmission of the results of its work to the Commission on the Status of Women, for information, in the same year;

20. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to make the report available to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-first session.